THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Government had issued a draft notification *vide* S.O. 167(E) dated 6th February, 2002 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for the purpose of declaring Matheran and surrounding areas as Eco-Sensitive Zone. A large number of objections and suggestions have been received from the public, Maharashtra State Government, peoples' representatives, NGOs and other stake holders in response to the draft notification. The notification is to be finalized keeping in view the objections and suggestions received on the draft notification.

Action plan for mountain development

3170. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level National Committee has been constituted to prepare an action plan for mountain development; and

(b) if so, what are the terms of reference of the Committee and by when it is expected to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A National Committee for celebration of UN International Year of Mountains 2002 has been constituted. However, its Terms of Reference do not require preparation of an Action Plan for mountain development. Thus, question of submission of a report on this point does not arise.

Eviction from forest land

3171. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Governments have been directed to summarily evict encroachments of forest land;

(b) if so, the details in this regard, the guidelines for determining encroachment, quantum of forest and under encroachment and evicted, during the last three years and the number of affected families, State-wise;